

DOUBTS DAUGHTER SLEW CHRISTLER

Mother of Mrs. Carleton Unwilling to Accept Verdict of Coroner's Jury

MYSTERY OVER REVOLVER

Hayre, Mont., Oct. 30.—While Mrs. Christler today was on an eastbound train accompanying the body of her slain husband, the Rev. Leonard J. Christler, rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church and known as the "Bishop of all outdoors," Mrs. Joseph Pyle, mother of Mrs. Margaret Carleton, whose body was found beside that of Christler, is attempting to prove that her daughter did not commit murder and suicide.

A coroner's jury brought in a verdict yesterday stating that Mrs. Christler killed Mr. Christler and then shot herself while temporarily deranged. A physician told Mrs. Pyle that her daughter was in a state from an overdose of sleeping powders. Mrs. Christler left with the body of her husband for Watatoo, N. Y., yesterday morning.

In spite of the coroner's jury verdict, Mrs. Pyle is now engaged in a legal battle to have the body of her husband returned to her. She is now engaged in picking together bits of a torn letter found in the washbasin in her daughter's room and which she declares is in Mrs. Christler's writing. That Mrs. Christler had an intention for the murder is admitted by Mrs. Pyle.

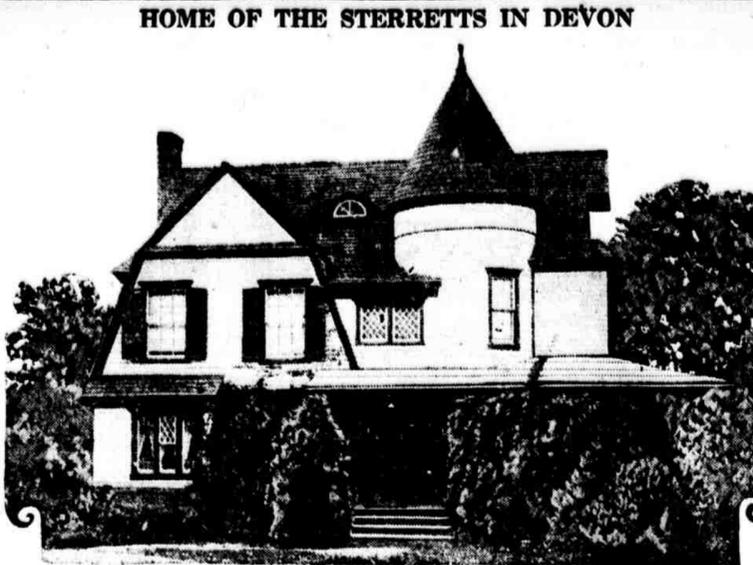
A letter, said to be from Mrs. Carleton, dated in California, August 25, says in part: "I have been thinking a great deal lately that it is not fair that you should have any legal restraint upon you. There is absolutely no chance for happiness for you as my wife. There are lots of good successful men who would make you happy. Probably you have met one or two. If this is so, I am fix things so that you can be free to marry."

Attached to this letter was one said to be in the handwriting of Mrs. Christler. In part it says: "Am amazed at Frank's attitude. Why not be honest with ourselves? When his beginning of honesty is to first pay the debts he contracted with you two were partners, then talk about a move to the next step; why back in such a manner what I owe you, mother and elsewhere—the liabilities of both of you—and pack all the burdens of debt on your heart and shoulders?"

"Any how I want to see you clean the slate at Hayre. Am coming to help. Your stock is going up there. Keep it going. Your own standard for pluck, common sense and honesty in Montana, your honesty is going to be recognized and respected. I am, health and God's blessings only permit."

Los Angeles, Oct. 30.—(By A. P.)—Frank Carleton, former Montana judge, now practicing law in Los Angeles, will leave today for Hayre, Mont., to take charge of the body of his wife, Mrs. Margaret Carleton. Judge Carleton was on a motor trip in the Imperial Valley, California, and Lower California, when word reached his relatives here of the deaths of his wife and the Rev. Leonard J. Christler at Hayre.

WATCHING NOVEMBER ELECTIONS Political changes have been coming with startling frequency all over the world. The resignation of Lord George was one of the most important. A New York Herald writer says, "The battle between the two parties is being fought on a new basis. It is a battle for the soul of the nation."



HOME OF THE STERRETTS IN DEVON

Postal Officials Trail Poisoned Cake Sender

Continued from Page One

Search Home Again Today

Letters and other papers found in the house were only such as would be in any well-ordered household, according to the investigators. Another search was started today.

Mrs. Sterrett told Inspector Simpson, in the presence of Corporal Flor, of the state police, that she had lunch at home on Thursday and that she moved to Wayne and bought some provisions.

She stopped at the Devon postoffice and was given the cake parcel by Mrs. B. J. Gillis, postmistress. The parcel had a special delivery stamp. There are no facilities of Devon for the immediate dispatch of special mail.

Mrs. Sterrett started briefly with the postmaster and then went to her home. There she opened the package and found a piece of cake, well baked and sprinkled with white icing. Officials believe the cake had been impregnated with poison.

Mrs. Sterrett tried to contact the woman who had sent the cake. She got it to one Mrs. M. and a woman was served at 4:30 o'clock. Mrs. Sterrett said the cake in fact, before the meal, each preparing of the mysterious gift.

Stricken After Eating Cake

Mr. Sterrett became ill fifteen minutes later. His wife telephoned for Dr. John N. Slaughter, of Devon, but he was one, and she then summoned Dr. Della H. Williams, of Berwyn.

Dr. Williams reached the house between 5:30 and 6 P. M., and found the husband in bed, very ill.

"Did Mrs. Sterrett tell you her husband had been poisoned?" The physician was asked today.

"That is a question I cannot tell," Dr. Williams said smilingly. "This is a case for the coroner."

A nurse remained with the husband and wife Thursday night, and Mrs. Sterrett was removed to the hospital Friday morning and her husband Friday afternoon.

A post-mortem was made yesterday on Sterrett's body by Dr. Herbert A. Boswell, physician at Coroner Neville, of Southwicks. A laboratory examination will be made of the stomach and an inquest then will be ordered.

As in the Hall-Mills murder case at New Haven, Ct., two months ago, it is believed in the investigation, Mr. Sterrett died in Montgomery County and the poison was received at Devon, in Chester County.

Two members of the dead man's family here when told their brother was dying. They are Joseph R. Sterrett, of New York, a member of the accounting firm of Price, Waterhouse & Co., and Jay J. Sterrett and Robert S. Sterrett, farmers of Brooksville, Pa.

Miss Mary Sterrett, 238 South Seventh street, a niece of Sterrett, was with him when he died. Mrs. Martha Campbell, of Warren, Pa., listened to her stricken daughter and son-in-law and is now at Mrs. Sterrett's bedside.

"I learned my daughter did not want me notified," said Mrs. Campbell today. "But a nurse sent a telegram to me. I couldn't see my daughter yesterday because of her condition. When I did see her I was shocked at the change in her appearance, due to illness and worry. She looked like an entirely different person."

"Mr. Sterrett and my daughter visited me in my home near Warren recently. While there they got word that settlement had gone through for the house they planned to buy at St. Davids. They were very happy and talked over many plans for their new home."

Mrs. Campbell said her daughter is thirty-six years old, the eldest of ten children. Joseph R. Sterrett, one of the dead man's brothers, submitted voluntarily to questioning today. He had seldom visited his brother's home, he said, but so far as he knew his brother and his sister-in-law were happy.

Asked if he knew the authorities believe jealousy may have prompted the crime, Mr. Sterrett said: "It surprises there is such a thought, but the police often formulate views which do not hold water."

would wish to take the lives of Sterrett and his wife," he said. "Sterrett was one of the most popular men in our office. He was regular in his duties and had absolutely no sporting proclivities so far as I know."

Charles R. Lehman, a druggist of Devon and an intimate friend of Sterrett, believes a woman sent the poisoned cake.

"Who the woman was or why she did it, I cannot imagine," Mr. Lehman continued. "Sterrett was the kind of man who never looked at a woman. I knew him intimately. We have been on trips together and sooner or later, in a friendship of this kind, one fellow gets to know the other one pretty well. Some men, while perfectly on the level, are a type which will often call attention to a pretty face or a pretty figure on the street or in a train, but Sterrett could walk past a million of them and never see a single one."

Thinks Cake Was for Wife

"He was always home on the dot when his day's work was done and he lived a fine, upright, clean life. He was quiet, unobtrusive and would walk away from a dispute rather than argue. I never heard him use profane language in any degree, and I do not believe that the poison was intended for him. The whole cake was hardly enough for one person, and Mrs. Sterrett could have disposed of it alone, but it was more like her to save it and share it with her husband."

"I have known Mrs. Sterrett for many years, even before she was married. She is a fine woman, but not the type, that one might call attractive. Mrs. Lehman and I have been in their house time and time again and we have never observed a single action or heard a single word that could possibly lead

us to believe they had ever been anything but happy and contented. "They had just purchased a fine new home at St. Davids and were to have made the settlement for it during the coming week. It is the deepest mystery that has ever come into my life and I hope it can be solved."

It was rumored in Devon today that several weeks ago two foreigners claimed they were attacked by a dog at the Sterrett home. The attention of the authorities has been called to the supposed incident.

Wall Falls into Cellar

The brick wall of the Quaker City Japanning and Enameling Company, 916 Cherry street, collapsed yesterday and carried tons of debris into an excavation beside it at 914 Cherry street, intended as a basement for a garage in course of construction.

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